

## THE NEW GRADUATE GATHERING: CONSCIOUS LIVING

*Karen Malik and Cam Danielson designed a new workshop for TMI graduates and cofacilitated it on August 6–9, 2010. They recently had a conversation about the history of the Graduate Gathering, the purpose and objectives of the new workshop on Conscious Living, and what graduates who choose to attend can expect. A second workshop is scheduled for December 3–6, 2010.*

**Karen:** The history of the *Graduate Gathering* begins in 1978 when TMI program graduates started getting together spontaneously. For over two and a half years I had given a weekend workshop each month at the same place in Mill Valley, California. People who had taken the workshop previously knew my schedule and would start showing up with their sleeping bags “hoping” to listen to a few Hemi-Sync® exercises before I broke down the equipment. I always said, “Yes, of course!” Afterward, they would help me load everything up, and we would all go out for dinner at a Howard Johnson’s restaurant. Thus began the *Graduate Gathering*.

Then, as I began giving Monroe workshops at the San Francisco Art Institute (SFAI) with its dean, Fred Martin—and also at other places in California—more graduate groups wanted to form. There were groups in Oakland, Monterey, Orange County, Los Angeles, and San Diego. I would travel to Southern California and alternate between Orange County, Los Angeles, and San Diego approximately once a month.

I also gave Monroe workshops regularly at Antioch University in Seattle, Washington, and other sites there, as well as in Denver. The same thing happened: graduates would show up—by that point, with an invitation from me—and we would enjoy listening to exercises and socializing. It evolved into graduates bringing their family and friends to “have a taste” of Hemi-Sync, to see if they wanted to take a full workshop. It was a special way of serving the graduates because they truly wanted to share their experience with the people they cared about. The gatherings also helped spread the word about the Institute and develop its presence on the West Coast. It was natural that there would be a great deal of interest in Bob Monroe’s work once we got the word out. I had promised Bob I would do that.

After Bob made his transition in 1995, I once again created a graduate-focused weekend—this time here at TMI. It gave TMI a chance to offer our graduates a convenient and cost-effective way to get together, enjoy the ambience and each other, reinforce the higher focus levels, and have a personal retreat. These gatherings were well received, and there were requests for more. Personally, I was searching for a way to deepen our time together on those weekends, and now, I feel we have something more to offer. Over the years I have had the great good

fortune and honor to witness and be a part of many of your personal journeys. Deep in my heart and with greatest respect, I have longed to offer the quality of support that would match the preciousness and profundity of those individual journeys. Based on Cam's research on the effects of long-term participation in TMI programs, I now feel that together we can offer a weekend experience that will support you in deepening your personal process with a group of fellow graduates. That's what it's all about.

**Cam:** What a history! It is an honor to be a part of it. I want to underscore the theme of support that makes this new *Graduate Gathering on Conscious Living* so important to me. A sentiment I often heard in my interviews is that coming to TMI was like coming home. That's quite a striking comment that speaks to the importance of TMI's work in helping individuals transcend personal fears and self-limiting beliefs through the knowledge that consciousness extends beyond their physical bodies. Nonetheless, it often left me with a question, which I—like others—had to face upon leaving TMI: if this felt like coming home, then what was I returning to?

The rest of the story, so to speak, begins after we return to our respective homes and communities. Here is where we face the challenge of integrating the inner exploration that goes on at TMI. Exploration and integration are two sides of the same coin of human development. We begin by going beyond our known boundaries to find what more we are—what more exists along the spectrum of consciousness. It takes courage to step into the unknown, but that is the legacy of Bob Monroe, who noted that by coming to TMI we make Knowns of our unknowns. But that experience doesn't end with the conclusion of the program.

We now embark on the second half of the journey, which is to return to those we live with, work with, and interact with across the different realms of our lives. It becomes a perplexing challenge to explain to them what we may not have words to describe. As Joseph Campbell asked: "How [do we] render back into the light-world language the speech-defying pronouncements of the dark? How represent on a two-dimensional surface a three-dimensional form, or in a three-dimensional image a multidimensional meaning? How translate into terms of 'yes' and 'no' revelations that shatter into meaninglessness every attempt to define the pairs of opposites? How communicate the message of the all-generating void to people who insist on the exclusive evidence of their senses?"

By coming to TMI we have changed our lives, but what does it mean? What do we do differently? What is it we have received in our inner explorations at TMI and how do we share it? How do we now live our lives? If these questions are relevant to the further unfolding of your life, then the next Graduate Gathering will be a good place to explore what it means to live more consciously with the gifts we have been given.

In this three-day *Conscious Living* workshop, we will focus on the following objectives:

- Increasing self-knowledge through autobiographical exercises and dialogue
- Learning to engage the higher self in a practice of clarifying one's calling and/or next phase of personal growth and development
- Learning to tell the new story about oneself in dialogue with others
- Completing a self-improvement plan to tap the unfulfilled potential of one's new story
- Creating a community of colleagues for support and further inquiry on actions taken after the workshop

**Karen:** And let me add, Cam, that this workshop will make use of Hemi-Sync, which as you noted about the power of the TMI experience, brings us into alignment with the full spectrum of our Being. Hemi-Sync facilitates an opening to our higher mind or Total Self (in Bob's language) and opens the doorway to long-term memory, the unconscious, and the collective unconscious. With this alignment and opening, not only the full experience of our lives becomes available, but also our highest wisdom and guidance, thus setting the stage for a level of integration that is extremely meaningful on our journey toward becoming conscious and whole human beings.

Integrating the life we are given with our soul's purpose can bring us to a level of fulfillment that comes with being awakened to the truth of our existence. We can live our lives from the perspective of more fully knowing who we truly are and what our life's journey is meant to be. For me, integration is key to the conscious fulfillment of my life's/soul's purpose and existence. The goal is to manifest in my life all that I am. During this weekend, each graduate will have an opportunity to deepen their process, understanding, and manifestation of their own creative consciousness. I look forward to holding space for a new level of Graduate Gathering and having all the fun of being together once again!!!

**Cam:** In my work over the last thirty years, I have explored many different technologies, practices, and methodologies for adult and leadership development and have never found anything more powerful than TMI programs for the depth of inner work that is accomplished in such a relatively short period of time. Of course, that has some interesting implications. To open up to the full spectrum of our being can be pretty overwhelming, especially if we don't have any means of support available to us in the succeeding weeks and months. One thing I have learned about the value of traditional contemplative practices is the role of a community in doing deep inner work. If we lack others who share similar goals and face similar challenges with whom we can speak about our experiences, find counsel and advice, and laugh and cry together as we stumble at times along our way, that lack can be a limiting factor in our continual evolution.

The key to community and personal development, in my estimation, is paying attention to what supports a rich inner life. That's no easy task since the objective is to create a bridge between the external circumstances or context of one's life and the impetus or drive of self-realization that owes no allegiance to that context. And yet, this too is part of the heritage of TMI and is expressed in the way the programs are constructed: to treat adults like adults. At TMI, I feel in charge of my own learning and development because TMI offers a container for me to be in contact with my guidance or my Higher Self in a direct and personally meaningful way.

The fact that TMI does this in a communal setting is not a distraction because our respective journeys are shared in our own time, in our own way, without forced interaction. To the degree that we need the social context to help us deepen our inward exploration, that is available. But again, it feels directed by virtue of my own guidance as opposed to outward circumstances or structured activities. I would describe it as a place where we learn what engagement with others through our Higher Selves can mean. For instance, I have received guidance from someone speaking to me who may not have even realized (at the ego level) the importance of what they had shared. But just as important, I would not have known how to receive their message if I was not in such direct communion with my own guidance.

This same principle applies to our work of integration in the organization of the *Graduate Gathering workshop on Conscious Living*. We will use our respective practices—aided by Hemi-Sync—to engage our deeper selves and each other in questions about purpose and direction in our lives in an effort to live more aware of guidance in our daily actions and interactions with others.

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